

DOLIR REVIEW

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Jefferson City Regional Claims Center Celebrates 5th Anniversary

By Doris Neier, Division of Employment Security

The Jefferson City Regional Claims Center (JCRCC) opened on November 12, 1996, making Missouri the fourth state in the nation to introduce the automated telephone unemployment benefits claim filing method. A total of 36 counties were combined to make up the region served by the 39 staff members. Staff for the newly created center transferred in from Camdenton, Columbia, Hannibal, Jefferson City, Kirksville, Mexico, Rolla, and the Division's Benefits Section, Interstate Unit and UI Programs Section.

The introduction of the automated telephone method was developed for integrity of the system, for full and effective service to the claimant and for efficiency and cost control. Automating many of the time

consuming processes made it possible for the claims representatives to accommodate more calls effectively and resulted in the customers spending less time on the phone.

Following the introduction of the Jefferson City center, the Kansas City Regional Claims Center opened in December 1996, the Springfield Regional Claims Center in July 1997

and the St. Louis Regional Claims Center in October 1997. Today 36 states have adopted this method of unemployment benefits claims filing.

The Jefferson City Regional Claims center currently has 60 employees in Unemployment Insurance claims and 18 in Benefit Payment Control for a total of 78 staff.

The Claims Center celebrated by serving cake provided by Janice Belt, manager. Guests included Gracia Backer, director of the Division of Employment Security, Marilyn Hutcherson, assistant director of the Division and UI Programs staff.



Original employees of the Jefferson City Regional Claims Center who are still employed at the Center today. From left, first row (seated): Patty Doherty, JoAnn Markway, Linda Stites and Lisa McDaniel. Second row, from left: Janice Belt, Lynne Terpstra, Becky Buhr, Howard Neises, Carl Kidwell and Les Cable. Third row, from left: Pat Noonan, Betty Means, Beverly Gallagher, Don Duncan, Gerry Kampeter and Pat Wise.

Not pictured: Phyllis Caudle, Linda Allen, Mary Turner and Ruth Jaegers.

The JCRCC answered 858 initial claim calls and 1,023 information calls for the week ending November 16, 1996. During the same week in 2001 they answered 2,235 initial claim calls and 2,574 information calls.

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SYLVIA FRANK

Title: Clerk IV
Division: Administration
Section: Financial Management
Location: Jefferson City, MO

Employee Profile

Q What do you consider the most important thing your program/division does for Missouri citizens?

A The Financial Management Section is responsible for preparing and monitoring the yearly budget for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and paying all the Department's bills. The maintenance of our yearly budget enables the Department's finances to run smoothly. We handle the divisions'/sections' fiscal matters so they can concentrate on serving their customers and do their job helping the people of Missouri.

Q How does what you personally do in your job help or affect Missouri citizens?

A Part of my job as secretary to the section is to enter and track the many forms that we receive for approval thus enabling bills to be paid so our Department can continue serving the citizens of Missouri.

Q What part of what you do gives you the most satisfaction/pride/feeling of accomplishment?

A Being able to help people either in person or on the telephone with any questions they may have.

DOLIR Review is Changing...

As part of the Department's program of cost cutting measures, paper copies of the **DOLIR Review** will not be printed after this issue. DOLIR employees can find the **Review** on the Department's Intranet site under "Department News."

Retirees can find it on our public Internet site www.dolir.state.mo.us under "Department News." If you don't

have Internet access at home, most public libraries have computers you can use.

We value the opinions and readership of our retired co-workers and wish to continue to provide printed copies of the newsletter to you. Depending on budget constraints, we hope to provide a less-expensive paper version of **DOLIR Review** to our retirees in the future.

Quote of the Month

You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him.

– Malcolm Forbes



Happy Holidays

Another year is almost gone, and it has been a busy one for the Department. In addition to helping thousands of Missourians get the unemployment and workers' compensation benefits they needed in 2001, we helped provide the state's workers with safe and healthy workplaces, enforced anti-discrimination laws and helped promote equal access to jobs. All of these are large tasks, and all are vital to our state and its citizens.

But perhaps even more impressive is the fact that so many of our employees also went above and beyond these important daily tasks and truly excelled at what they do. A group from Research and Analysis won the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity for their work improving

the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses. This year, Employment Security has used wage garnishments to recover more than one-and-one-half times the amount of fraudulent benefits claims they recovered last year. In addition, they are on track to recover a record dollar amount of fraudulent benefits claims through prosecution efforts. The Governor's Council on Disability organized and held the first annual Missouri Youth Leadership Forum for students with Disabilities and it was a great success. Labor Standards sponsored a child safety calendar contest for Missouri schoolchildren and honored their first Outstanding Youth Employer. The Department was pleased and excited to have a State Employee of

the Month. And the State Board of Mediation has geared up to handle a new, heavier load of conferences and elections resulting from the Governor's recent executive order on collective bargaining for state workers. These are just a few of the extraordinary things you did this year.

You have been busy! Thanks for your hard work and dedication in 2001. Happy holidays and here's to another good year in 2002.

Catherine Leapheart

A Note of Thanks

Recently I was off for a week to attend the funeral of my father-in-law. I have worked for the state for just one year, and in that time I have been so touched by the kindness, intelligence and compassion that exists at the St. Louis Regional Claims Center.

I am a retired teacher of 20 years and I have also worked for a dot com, but never have I experienced the high level of thoughtfulness directed toward my family as I did after the recent passing of my father-in-law. Never have I had fellow workers reach out and express their concern so completely as the folks here in the St. Louis Regional Claims Center did. Perhaps you know that when you arrive home from an out of town funeral exhaustion kicks in. However waiting in my mail slot were many, many kind notes and cards from my co-workers reminding me that they understood and cared. The cards continued many days after I returned to work. I have never worked with such a fine group of people as the folks here at the St. Louis Regional Claims Center.

Sincerely,

David Drinkard

Samaritan Center

1310 East McCarty, P.O. Box 1687
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1687

October 31, 2001

Ms. Catherine Leapheart, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
3315 West Truman Boulevard
Jefferson City, MO 65109

Dear Ms. Leapheart:

We are very thankful for the pallet full of food recently delivered to the Samaritan Center from your Department for distribution to our clients. Please express our thanks and appreciation to all involved in this endeavor, as it is only because of the generosity and kindness of the good people of the Jefferson City community that we are able to continue giving aid to our neighbors in need. May God bless each of you for your thoughtfulness!

Marylyn DeFeo
Volunteer Executive Director
Samaritan Center



After Hours

Ways to Build Better Relationships

Contributed by Paul Rockers, Organization and Staff Development

With busy schedules and multiple demands at home and work, it's easy to take your relationships for granted. But the quality of your relationships with your spouse and children is the foundation on which your family is built. Good communication takes time and teamwork. It's a process in which the whole family should become involved.

Spend Time Together

The most important relationships in your life deserve your time and attention. If you feel that you're spending too much time on work and not enough with your family, it's time to re-evaluate your priorities.

- ♦ After you hang up your coat and put away your briefcase, dedicate your first 15 minutes at home to your children.
- ♦ Mark on the calendar part of each weekend to spend some private time with each child.
- ♦ Make a point to spend at least an hour alone with your spouse each day, no matter how busy you are with work and parenting responsibilities.

Make Time to Discuss Problems

One of the first strategies to build and strengthen your family communication is to avoid letting aggravations accumulate. When frustrations are not vented, they can lead to unpleasant explosions that do no one any good. Try setting up family meetings, perhaps once a week, as a time for open dialog. Each member of the family can use this time to get little annoyances off their chests. If someone feels resentful that they always do a particular household chore without any help, for example, this is a time to bring up their feelings.

Have Fun Together

Strong family relationships are based on sharing all kinds of experiences. Make a point of planning fun activities your family can enjoy together, such as camping, bicycling and taking trips to the movies, museums and libraries.

When You Argue, Do So Constructively

Arguments all too often turn into mud-slinging events. Stick to the point and avoid dragging out old quarrels. Try to maintain a positive approach. If you have a legitimate concern, focus on it. Resist the temptation to bicker about things that have no bearing on the issue at hand. Also, be willing to give a little and compromise.

Put Yourself in the Other Person's Shoes

Don't lose sight of the other person's perspective; learn to value it. Listen and acknowledge the other person's concerns, then discuss why you perceive the situation differently. Encourage that person to explain his or her feelings and make assurances that you want to understand his or her perspective. Then make an honest attempt to really listen.

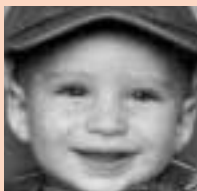
Accept Feelings; Avoid Judgment

Even if something seems ridiculous to you, it may be of genuine concern to the other party. Feelings are real, so take them seriously. In the areas where you have conflicts, work together to pinpoint the trouble spots and implement changes to correct them.

Source: Parlay International.

SUCCESS IN CARING COMMUNITIES

Aaron John Spillars, age 9 months. Aaron is the son of John Spillars of Information Systems and Ann Spillars of the Jefferson City Regional Claims Center.



Neet's News ...

Caring Communities Partnerships have been improving the lives of Missouri's children and families for the past seven years. Some of these successes have been recorded, as the examples below indicate, but others have not because there has never been a comprehensive statewide system in place to collect and track data. However, a new reporting system is being implemented which will clearly document future statewide successes of the Caring Communities Initiative.

Caring Communities Success Stories

In Boone County, Caring Communities, working with seven elementary schools in the Columbia School District, developed strategies focused on increasing attendance. The daily average attendance at Caring Communities schools increased from 89.29% in 1995-1996 to 94.12% in 1999-2000, a 5.4% increase!

In Cape Girardeau Caring Communities Schools, implementation of a citizenship curriculum and support from a local community mental health provider have helped reduce discipline referrals by 49% and repeat suspensions are down 77% from 1998 to 2000.

In Butler County, the Eugene Fields Elementary School in the Poplar Bluff School District worked with Caring Communities to implement several reading and literacy programs to improve reading achievement. Fourth grade student scores increased from 42% to 62% as measured by a national reading assessment. This increase was realized at what was once characterized as the district's poorest performing school.

The Pemiscot County Welfare to Work (WtW) initiative provides education, training, transportation and linkages to employers for people transitioning from TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) to work. The program has maintained an 81% job retention rate, with participants being placed in jobs for more than six months and up to two years from March 1999 to present.

In the Jackson County Buckner Elementary School neighborhood, citizens identified the lack of a community gathering place, youth crime and enforcement of existing curfew laws as issues related to unacceptable crime rates in their community. They opened the school as a community center, implemented youth/adult programs, and established a community action network to address their concerns. Through these efforts, they realized a 60% decrease in assaults, a 58% decrease in larceny, and a 50% decrease in value of stolen property.

*Neet McCowen is Caring Communities Coordinator for the Department.
To reach her, please call (573) 751-3817.*

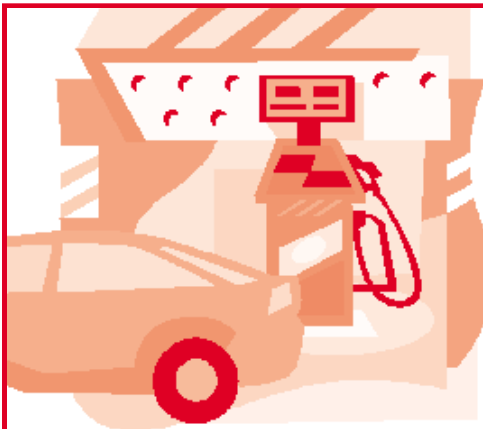
Dunn's Safety Tips - Smoke Alarms Save Lives

The majority of fatal home fires happen at night, and the smell of smoke won't always wake you up. In fact, smoke and poisonous gases can put you into a deeper sleep. Home smoke alarms can wake you in time to escape – cutting your chances of dying nearly in half. Smoke alarms are inexpensive. They do save lives. In most states they are required by law in private homes.

Install a smoke alarm on every floor of the home, in the basement and outside each sleeping area. Smoke rises, so alarms are required to be mounted high on a wall or on the ceiling. Ceiling mounted alarms should be mounted at least 4 inches away from the nearest wall. Don't install an alarm too near a door, window or a forced air register that would interfere with the airflow to the alarm.

Remember usually the best time to replace the smoke alarm battery is when we change the time on our clocks in the spring and the fall. Smoke alarms don't last forever. Replace any smoke alarm that is more than ten years old.

Steve Dunn is the Department's Safety Coordinator. He is also Director of the Mine and Cave Safety and Health Consultation Program for the Division of Labor Standards.



Using Alternative Fuel Vehicles

State agencies are buying more alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) than ever-but they're still filling them with regular gasoline. According to an annual report issued by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Energy Center, the number of alternative fuel vehicles purchased by state agencies has increased, but the use of alternative fuel in these AFVs has declined over the past year.

Alternative fuels such as E-85 ethanol, natural gas and propane are beneficial for both the environment and the economy. When burned, they emit fewer air pollutants and toxins and in turn promote better health and lessen the impact of global climate change. Alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles can also benefit the economy by creating new jobs and commercial opportunities through vehicle

conversions, new technology development and greater use of domestically produced fuels.

Between the 1999 and 2000 fiscal years, actual usage of alternative fuel in vehicles capable of burning it had fallen to 10 percent, down from 22 percent in the previous year. In 1999, a legislative mandate established a goal of 30 percent alternative fuel use in state alternative fuel vehicles by July 1, 2001.

It is important for state employees to make an extra effort in using alternative fuel in fleet vehicles. This includes being willing to go a reasonable distance out of the way and to pay a reasonable amount more for alternative fuels than for regular gasoline. Alternative fuel vehicles may either use E-85 ethanol, propane or compressed natural gas.

Several alternative fuel refueling stations have opened in the past three years. E-85 ethanol can be purchased at Convenient Mart, 701 Eastland Drive, Jefferson City; Convenient Mart, 3714 W. Truman Blvd., Jefferson City; Phillips 66,

2110 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis; Claymont Auto Service, 15401 Clayton Road, Ballwin; and Presto, 649 Bannister Road, Kansas City.

One compressed natural gas site is located at the Shell station at I-44 and Hampton Avenue in St. Louis.

Numerous propane refueling sites are located throughout Missouri. The Missouri Propane Gas Association in Jefferson City (<http://www.mopga.com>) publishes a directory of propane refueling locations.

The Division of Workers' Compensation has pool vehicles that accept E-85 ethanol and are available to use by DOLIR employees on department business. When you check out a car, ask if an alternative fuel vehicle is available.

Article courtesy of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.



Rediscover Your Missouri

Rediscover the heart of America with a Missouri weekend travel getaway. Delight your family with a visit to any one of Missouri's many unique destinations and attractions. From city skyline to rural charm, Missouri offers just what you're looking for. Discover the nightlife that's made St. Louis and Kansas City famous. Explore the beautiful state parks and waterways. Or simply escape to the rolling country roads of Missouri's wine country and see for yourself why

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rediscover
YOUR MISSOURI

John Pippen is October Employee of the Month



John Pippen, a Telecommunications Analyst III with the Information Systems section in Jefferson City is the Department's October 2001 Employee of the Month.

Pippen was nominated for the honor because of his outstanding work overhauling and improving the statewide telephone systems for the Appeals Unit. According to members of the Appeals Unit, Pippen handled the project with "professionalism, talent and his ever present good nature." They added, "What really makes John special is that whatever the assignment is, you can count on the task being accomplished quickly, correctly and with a minimum of costs."

Lifestyles

Retirees from November 2001

UI Appeals

Phyllis Rice, Clerk Typist II

Division of Employment Security

Dixie Smith, Contributions Technician II, Employer Contributions

Lifestyles

New Employees from November 2001

UI Appeals

Hans K. Amann, Appeals Referee II

Lifestyles

Promotions from November 2001

Administration

John Stuckenschneider, Computer Operator III, Information Systems

Division of Workers' Compensation

Robert Bruchsaler, Investigator II

Division of Employment Security

Amanda Wolfe, Clerk Typist II

Reporting Employee Fraud or Misconduct

By Fernando Mendez, Internal Security

DOLIR employees share in the responsibility of guarding against internal fraud and abuse. In October, a new form, MODOL-4452 Report of DOLIR Employee Fraud or Misconduct, was introduced. Any employee who suspects an act of fraud or misconduct has occurred within the Department should complete this form and send it to Internal Security. The form provides relevant information needed in order to start investigative actions. All forms are handled in a confidential manner. The reporting employee may remain anonymous. However, your identity is helpful to accurately investigate the claim of fraud or misconduct. In cases where you claim abuse has been made directly against you, you must be willing to testify and you must provide your name and phone number on the form.

Form MODOL-4452 Report of DOLIR Employee Fraud or Misconduct is available on the DOLIR Intranet under "Forms/Administrative." Procedures regarding this form may be found at paragraph B05-07050 in the DOLIR Administration Manual, which is also on the Intranet. If you have questions about completing this form or questions about internal fraud and abuse, call or e-mail Fernando Mendez, Internal Security at (573) 751-7073 or fmendez@dolir.state.mo.us.

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If you have any story ideas, or just want to comment on the DOLIR Review, please contact Joann Lindemann at (573) 751-7500.

Joann can be reached at jlindemann@dolir.state.mo.us. If you prefer to write, forward your comments to the Office of Public Affairs, PO Box 1958, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1958.